

SUBMISSION FROM ALICIA McGRUER

1. I am the mum of two children with Aspergers syndrome, a form of autism. I am delighted that this bill is coming before the Scottish Parliament and I really hope some changes will be made that make an impact on the children and their carers and not just be ticked box exercise.
2. For over 10 years we have had to struggle on behalf of our children with little support and at times antagonistic behavior by the education authority, teachers and head teachers. Both my children are fantastic boys, who just so happen to have Aspergers. They have the potential to be real contributors to society but there is a massive gap in providing for children with Aspergers. Not “bad” enough for “special schools” and not able to fully cope with mainstream they have fallen in to the black hole of “children with difficulties who don’t get support” in the education system. We have had to continue fight on their behalf to stop them being written off, it took until my oldest child was in 1st year at secondary school before a referral for diagnosis was made and then that took over one year. I could go on and on and on about how dreadful it has been. I am fed up with people telling me things are improving – frankly “improving” is not good enough. It needs to work and work properly – the Bill needs to be meaningful, not diluted for it to have any real meaning. A step forward and the various other jargon doesn’t make one bit of different to my children, real on the ground change is needed both in mindset and action. I look forward to following the progress of the Bill and those supporting it.

Alicia McGruer
23 September 2010